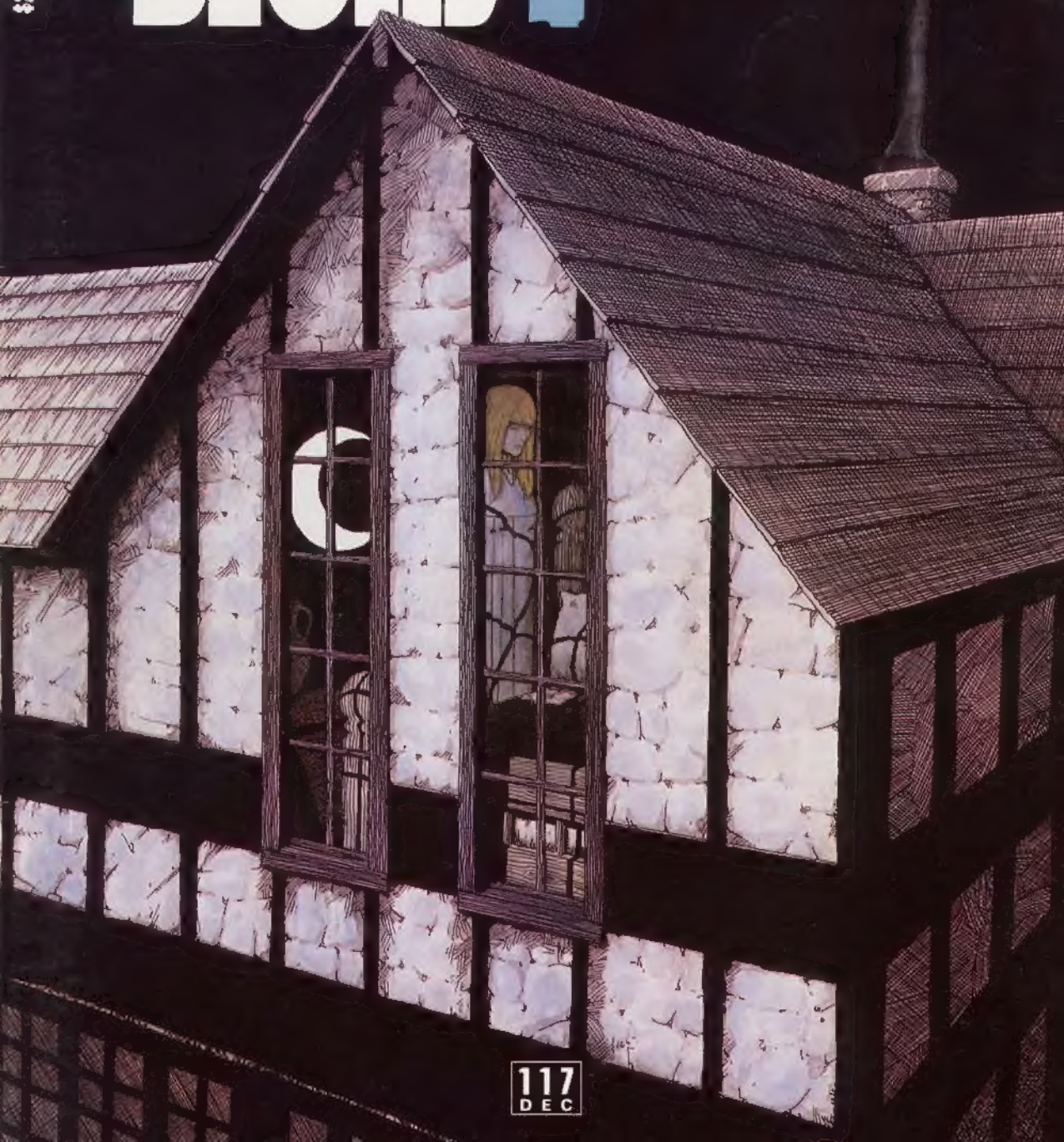


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CEREBUS JAKKA'S STORY 4



117
DEC

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

It was an exhilarating moment in Northampton when we had final agreement on all thirteen points of a first draft of a Bill of Rights for Creators. We had a nice little round of table thumping at the conclusion and then Pete Laird suggested that everyone should have a chance to speak up in the remaining hour or so on any subject that they wanted to kick around or things as creators we might be thinking about coming up on the next summit here in Kitchener. Ken Mitchroney, who created Space Ark and is drawing Myth Adventures, as well, mentioned that there was something that he wanted to bring up — not necessarily to get us all to take action on it or anything, but more just to point out something that bothered him; the treatment of funny animal artists within the comic book field.

Well, right away I thought he was way off base; I draw a funny animal character and I have no complaint about how I'm treated (or if I do it's not because I draw a funny animal character). But the nicest thing about these summits is how polite everyone is. When I saw the roomful of people at the get-acquainted meeting the first night, I thought (as everyone else did) My God, this is going to degenerate into an incoherent babble inside of five minutes. I suggested (worriedly) to Kevin and Peter that the "whoever holds the seashell talks" rule in *Lord of the Flies* was the only model I could think of that we could use to keep things from getting out of hand. A cigarette lighter or a salt shaker or whatever. As it turned out Kevin and Peter decided just to let everyone speak and see how it went. Amazingly enough, it went very well. Everyone spoke one at a time, everyone listened when they weren't speaking. So by the end of the second day we were willing to give anyone any length of uninterrupted speaking time that they needed. We were able to build our arguments gradually, piece by piece instead of bogging down in endless digression.

What Ken was saying was that a funny animal artist/writer is thought of as being less than a super-hero artist. They are paid less (usually about half). They get very little of any company's promotion and advertising. His point (particularly directed at independent and "independent" publishers) was that if you've got a name book selling 8,000 copies and a funny animal comic selling 8,000 copies, the revenue is the same for the company, but the pay and promotion and what-not is substantially less.

In answer to the argument (none of us had to say it out loud, Ken had obviously been down this debate road before) that a funny animal strip is less work than a realistic strip, Ken pointed out that he doesn't draw any more pages per day than any of us.

A page is a page is a page. Whether you're drawing two guys punching each other out or setting up a running sight gag you have to pour blood sweat and tears into it to make it work. Besides; Jack Kirby was drawing two to three times the output of an average penciller in the early sixties. Do you pay him less because he can produce it faster? By what right does someone say work by someone who has appeared in RAW is worth \$80 a page and a funny animal story is worth \$35 a page?

Ken also pointed out that funny animal guys are usually expected to do their own lettering for free. At the rate they're paid they're basically doing the inking and most of the pencilling for free as well.

And then he mentioned that he had made the acquaintance of a Golden Age funny animal artist who said they were getting about thirty-five dollars a page back in the forties. Had any of us heard of Jim Davis? Seventeen thought balloons appeared over seventeen heads with seventeen little pictures of Garfield. The other Jim Davis. Seventeen blank little thought balloons.

This guy worked for years and years in the field, his books at least as well known as Green Lantern and the Human Torch and what-not. Never got credit. Never gets articles written about him, indexes of his work etc. Never got paid well.

At this point I had mentally conceded Ken the point but it didn't seem to have any particular impact with me. Big deal, I thought, almost every creator in the last four decades has come and gone without their names being added to Siegel & Schuster, Bob Kane, Barks, Kirby and others in the Comic Book Pantheon.

Jim Davis, Ken told us, created Fox and Crow.

An absolute burst of recognition; awe, amazement (the shame came later) came over all seventeen of us at once. I checked my Overstreet Guide. Real Screen Comics ran for one hundred and eight consecutive issues. Fox and Crow — and we all thought of Garfield and then drew a blank.

Ken got a nice round of table-thumping.

It's not really enough, somehow.

I cancelled the Kitchener summit early in January since I think the Bill of Rights says it all. I hope to arrange or participate in a purely social gathering with the guys sometime this year.

CEREBUS

NO. 117 DECEMBER 1988

DAVE SIM
President

GERHARD
Backgrounds, cover-colour
and tones

KAREN McKIEL
Administrator

Circulation
26,500

JAKA'S STORY
a novel

PROLOGUE
(Cerebus 114)

POGROM'S PROGRESS
(Cerebus 115 to
Cerebus 119)

THE POET
(Cerebus 120 to
Cerebus 130)

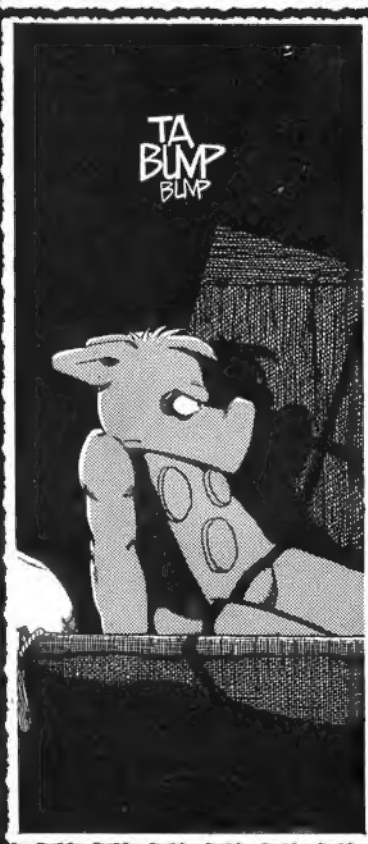
MYSTERY
ACHIEVEMENT
(Cerebus 131 to
Cerebus 136)

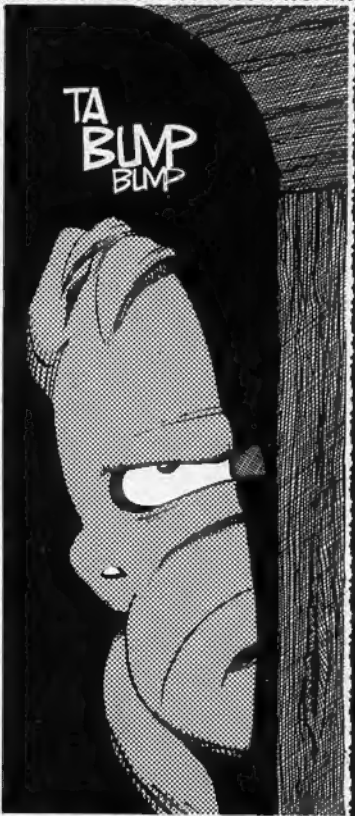
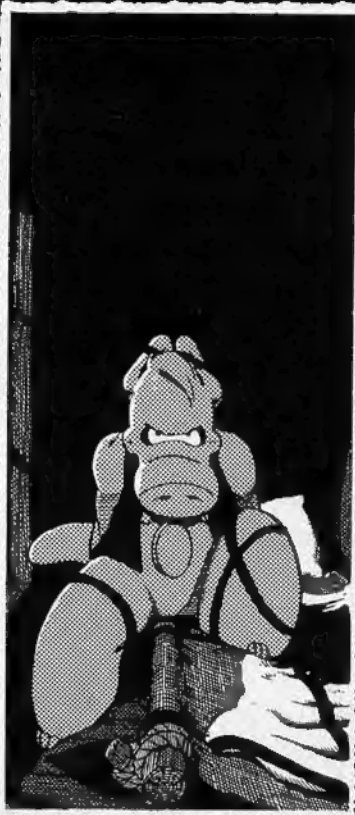
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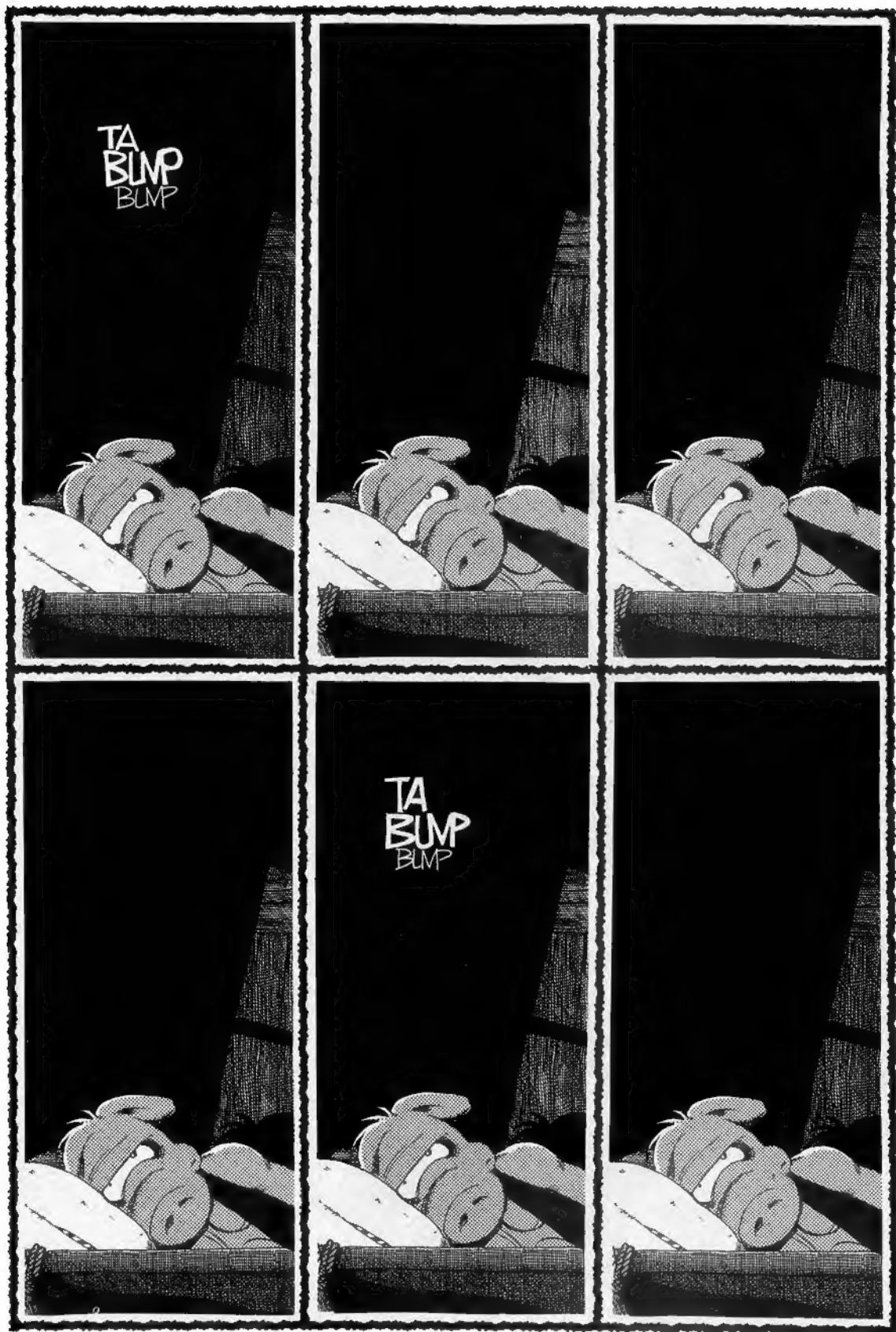






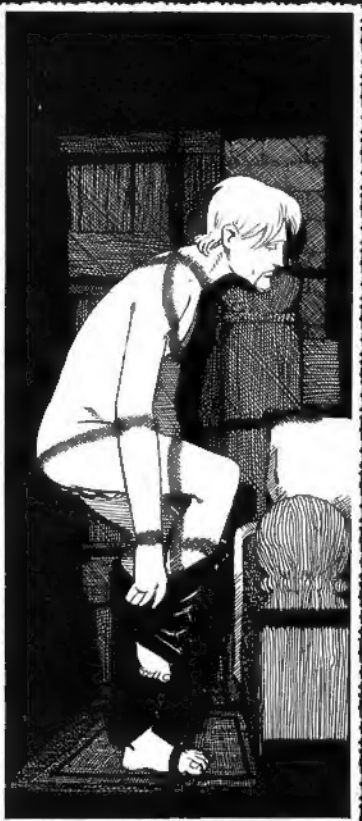


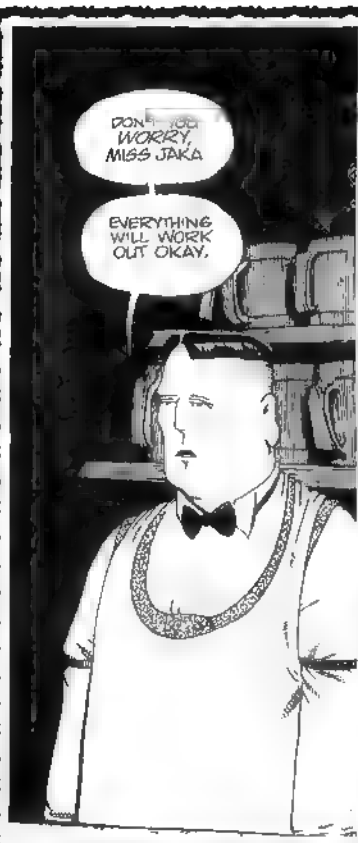


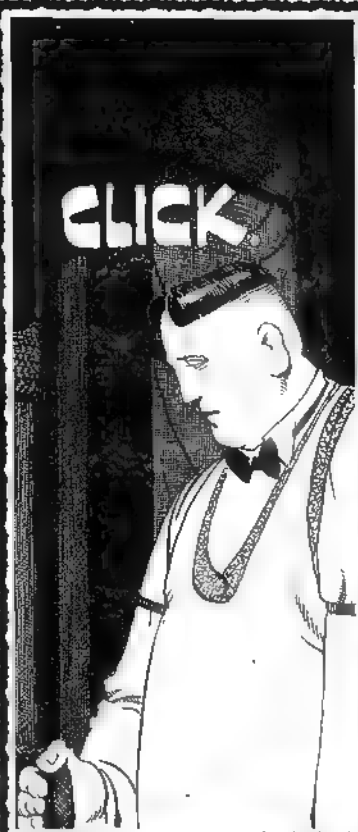




SHE HAD NO awareness of her head striking the ground; only an agonizing pain flowering behind her right ear. There was a piercing odor like ammonia high up in her sinuses. As if from a great distance, she heard Nurse's single, anguished scream. Then darkness crowded the edges of her sight and she heard nothing but the sound of her own heartbeat slowing.

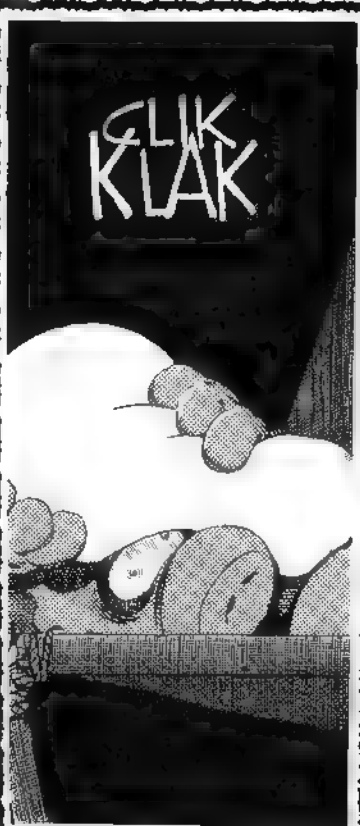
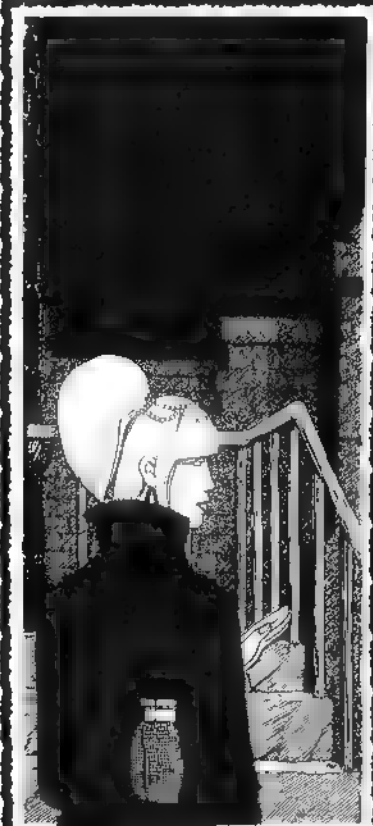
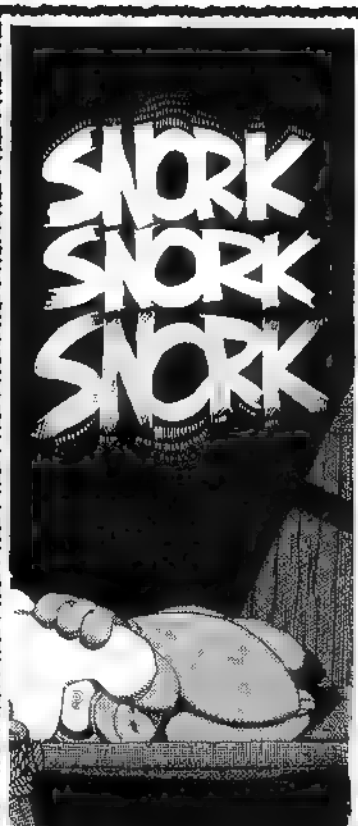








OR DAYS SHE
hovered near death.



CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK

CREAK

CREAK

CREAK







WE DON'T
KNOW THAT

MR. WITHERS
COULD BE A
CIRINIST...

OSCAR
COULD
BE A
CIRINIST



... MAYBE WE SHOULD
CALL CEREBUS...
SOMETHING ELSE...



JUST.



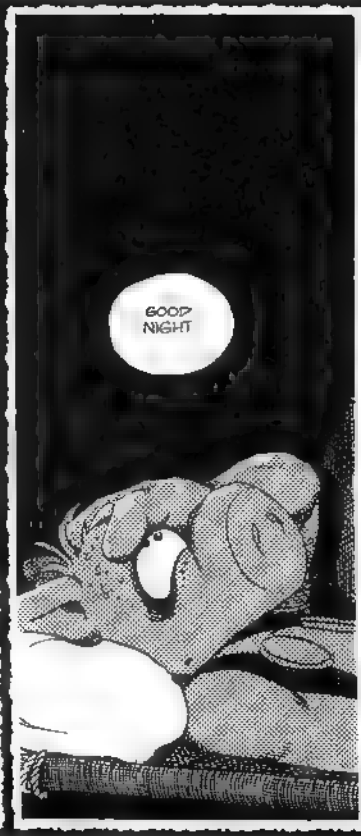
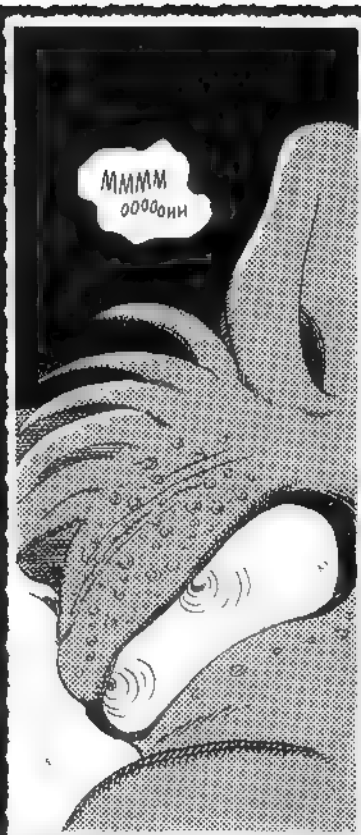
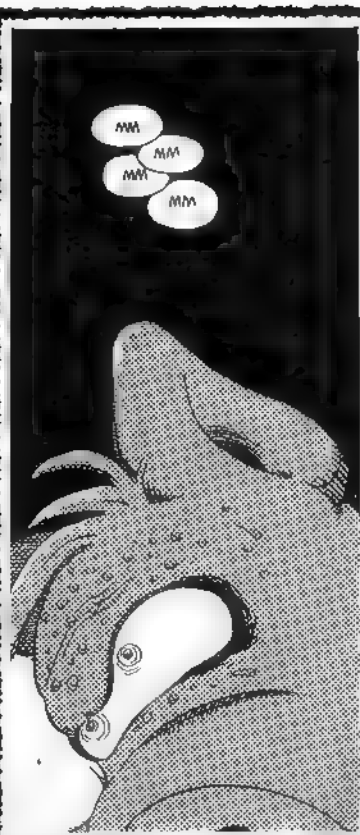
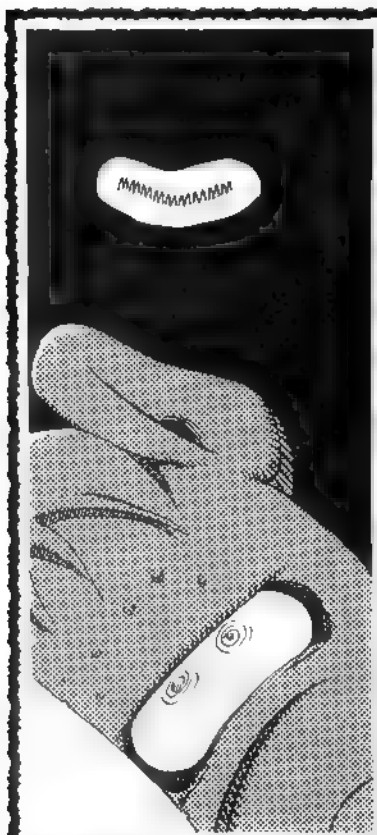
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AARDVARK C O M M E N T

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Mr. Sim,

1. Will there be a Cerebus role playing game in the near future?
2. I keep hearing the alternatives are in a decline. If that's true, please don't sell out to those comic companies that publish an endless hoarde of guys wearing leotards and defend the galaxy for truth, justice and the American way I'm sick to death of Super Heroes, Super Heroines, Super Aliens, Super Animals, Deranged Vigilantes, A-Men, X-Men, etc. Thank God (or Tarim) for Cerebus.
3. Does Cerebus shave?
4. Why are you guys always in trouble? Is it because you're bored? Looking to kill a boring Sunday? Nothing to do in Kitchener (if so, Montreal is a fun city)?

Yours truly,

John Psinas
2710 Cazeneuve,
Ville St. Laurent, Montreal
Quebec H4R 1T9

1. Nor in the distant future.
2. I don't think the real alternatives are in a decline.
3. No. The only place his fur grows is on top of his head.
4. Well, we're not always in trouble.

Dear Dave,

What the fuck's going on? (I always wanted to say fuck in a letter column) As the enclosed article shows, you've been here in Australia for a while now, even though you said the World Tour had been canceled and you were sick of

travelling. Of course, this will come as no surprise to your critics, who have always maintained you were a wanker.

The photo shows three members of the band "The Other Wankers", and the figure on the right looks suspiciously like you Dave! Moreover, the guy in the middle looks a bit like Gerhard, too! I won't even mention the fact that the Cecil guy in the pirate suit bears a passing resemblance to K'cor. Now we know the meaning of the back cover of issue #106-with Gerhard in a band! Moonlighting in a band would also explain why Cerebus is late every now and then. But the real clincher can be found in the article - "Cecil" has an "artist" friend, and that picture in the background looks remarkably like Sim art!!

I'd be sure it was you Dave, except we all know you'd never "deglamorise" sexual intercourse! (or can I say fucking?)

Yours inquisitively,

Anthony Gallagher
21 Westbury Grv, East St.,
Kilda, 3183, Melbourne,
AUSTRALIA

P.S. Where's Connie L. - it's been 28 issues now. And can you please print an excerpt from Bob Burden's "Fuck Poem"?

Poor Cecil is a man with a vision and the rest of the world is wearing bifocals.

WANK PLAN FLOPS IN BID TO PULL IN FANS

SELF-CONFESSED "wanker" Cecil Murgathoyd says sexual intercourse must be "deglamorised" and masturbation encouraged, if the AIDS fight is to be won.

The message might shock most people but Cecil is determined to take his campaign to the nation's young people.

But Cecil has been unable to muster support from stuffy bureaucrats for his views.

Despite holding "wash-shops" at Melbourne university campuses for the past six months, Cecil has met official indifference.

"I've been a wanker for years," Cecil said. "What I am saying is that anyone can be a wanker. There has been Gay Liberation and Women's Liberation, why not Wanker's Liberation?"

Cecil says he is taking his campaign to the "high-risk groups" - young students.

Sexual intercourse, he says, has been glamorised for too many years to the detriment of masturbation.

"What is needed is to

By MICHAEL COX

deglamorise sexual intercourse without seeming negative and puritanical, as this will provoke a powerful reaction from many young people," Cecil said.

"The answer is to promote masturbation as a valid, natural and fun activity in the language of today this is wanking."

Concerned

With the help of an artist friend, Cecil heads a group of concerned activists called The Other Wankers (TOW), which advocates masturbation instead of sexual intercourse.

The Victorian Corporate Affairs Office refused to register The Other Wankers title because it believed it might offend.

Cecil fronts a three-piece band which tours colleges and universities to sing



★ **CECIL MURGATHOYD and The Other Wankers.**

about the joys of "sexual self sufficiency".

The term from TOW also covers what they term "wash art" and there are plans for a wash coloring book to be released within a few weeks.

Through their "wash-shops" and "wash awareness weeks" the group hopes to spread their message with the use of music and art.

If Cecil has his way, slogans such as "Good Guys are Wankers", "Born-Again Virgins" and "No No Girls" will strike a chord in the

hearts and minds of the young generation.

But if his reception in the student lounge at the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences was any indication, he is yet to convince his target audience of the joys of abstinence.

The dozen or so students confronted by Cecil in his pirate outfit, greeted the performance with laid-back indifference and the occasional interjection of "Do you take requests?"

Asked why he wore a pirate's outfit during his performance, Cecil replied:

"Because I'm a wanker."

Only two students remained to the end of the performance, but Cecil refuses to be deterred by student scepticism.

"It is a pretty powerful concept we are hitting them with," Cecil, 30, said.

"The initial reaction from the girls is shock and disgust and the fellows have a good laugh about it. But they are starting to think quite seriously about it."

He approached the National Advisory Committee on AIDS

(NACAIDS), but was told they did not consider ideas "from off the street".

"I want to NACAIDS in July, but I don't think the person I spoke to liked the look of me. He kept asking me if there was someone else from the group he could speak to," Cecil said.

Cecil hopes that by performing such thought-provoking songs as The Cemetery Song, Wank Away, and No Way, the younger generation will take heed of TOW's message.

Yo Cerebus!

You should have jumped, you poor stupid bastard! "Die alone . . . unmourned and unloved" ain't even half the story, matey! If you had any idea of the goofy shit Sim is going to put you through for the next sixteen years, you'd fall on your sword right now! Could of saved yourself and thirty thousand readers a lot of pain. But you blew it! Had to look down, didn't ya? Oh well, wait for the 'I told ya so' in sixteen years time!

Sheez,

J.J.

I thought it was a little much addressing your postcard to 'The Dumb, Big Nosed, Hairy Thing.'

Dear Dave 'n' Ger,

I've just got a few things to say about issue one-hundred and fourteen.

Swell.

Groovy.

Lots of character.

Sincerely,

James Davidge
12432-52 Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 0P4

After twenty years, the purple micro-dot is finally wearing off. Soon he will remember how to write 'David James' at the bottom of his letters again.

Dear Dave;

OK, so now that you've taken me up on my idea to reprint Cerebus one issue at a time (see Aardvark Comment #97), I just have one question: How much is my cut and when do I get it??

Sincerely, Mark Peterson
2765 Louisiana Ct., #9
St. Louis Park, MN., 55426

Thirty-three dollars in two payments of 16.50 each January 29, 1988 and June 26, 1994.

Dear Dave,

I've chosen you as the recipient of this letter because you've been vocal in your support of the ideals and the cause that this letter represents, and because you're in a unique position to make this letter available to its intended audience: the comics fan. It is my hope that you will publish this letter, and ask other publishers of your acquaintance to do the same.

Here, then is my message:

It is a time for the slaying of giants.

We are all aware of the crime that was perpetrated against Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, then repeated against countless creators for fifty years. This crime must not be allowed to repeat itself for another five decades. It must stop now. The unique practice of corporate ownership of individuals's creations must cease.

It is within the power of the comics fan to end the rape of the creator.

The battle will not be won in the courtroom, for the conglomerates have too many lawyers, and too many invincible weapons such as signed contracts and legal precedent.

No, the battle will be won in the market place. In that arena, the power of the comics fan is absolute. In any contest between the customer and the vendor, where the goods in question are not necessities for survival, the customer will always win, and without a struggle. The vendor simply has nothing to fight with.

As a first move, I am calling for a boycott of all non-independents for one month. Let the month be July, 1989, for July is the one month (in the United States at least) that is formally dedicated to independence.

Join me in this boycott. Hurl your stone from the sling of your wallet. The giant will fall.

For once let us live the ideals of our beloved heroes. Let us do this one thing for truth, and for justice. Let us practice the American way of rebellion against tyrants.

United, we must win. United, we are the only power there is.

Yours in this just cause,

Ron Petrocco
79 Cedarhurst,
Bricktown, NJ., 08723

Everybody move back. I think he means it.

Dear Dave,

Considering the results of our latest election down here in the U.S., I've got a vital question Does "New, Improved George-Away" work on Bushes?

Sincerely,

Avram Grumer
5-B Debs Place,
Bronx, NY., 10475

Bushes, hedges, vines, houseplants. Watch for our ad in this Saturday's newspaper.

Dear Dave;

Amen!

Believe me when I say Cerebus is one of the greatest (if not the greatest) comic books around. I read the 112/113 issue and passed out. I was in a stupor. Wow!

Last week the first issue of Jaka's story came out. I can see it's going to be great, even though it did take a while to come out. I hope everything comes out o.k. and please, make a lot of double issues; I hate waiting for Cerebus.

What's next? Jaka's Story is already my favourite (next to High Society, that is). I'll just have to wait and see, won't I?

Keep your nose clean. You're the greatest.

Rafael T.
CPO 2578, Wheaton College,
Wheaton, ILL., 62966

What about three eighty page issues a year instead of twelve twenty page issues? A hush falls over the crowd.

Dear Dave,

For the last year or so, I have read and enjoyed **Church and State**. I also have a copy of **High Society**, so now I can read Cerebus past and future, simultaneously. Today I read issue 114 "the Prologue to Jaka's Story". I read it outside in a beautiful fall surroundings, much like the one on the cover. I am moved. Oh yes, this is good reading. I've got to write to you! This story will still be being read 20 years from now!

A long time ago, 5 years before the Feiffer interview in Playboy, I was 18 and had a compulsion to write. I had visions of many volumes, each on a facet of social behavior, told with as truthful and honest dissection as I could deliver. But I never got past the first couple of pages. You, Dave, have not only wrote the first volume but committed yourself to do the whole thing, with quality. And from the looks of it, each story will be more of a knock out than the last.

I was always impressed with the insight the Hernandez Bros. put into their female characterizations. Now, the personality profile I have of you and the wonderful human insight of Jaka's Story just don't match. Could I have been misled by the comics press? I think so. Looking forward to each and every issue!

Honored to write to you,

Cecil Boatwright
Atlanta, GA..

Misled? By the comic press? I don't know. Can they do that? Mislead people? The comic press?

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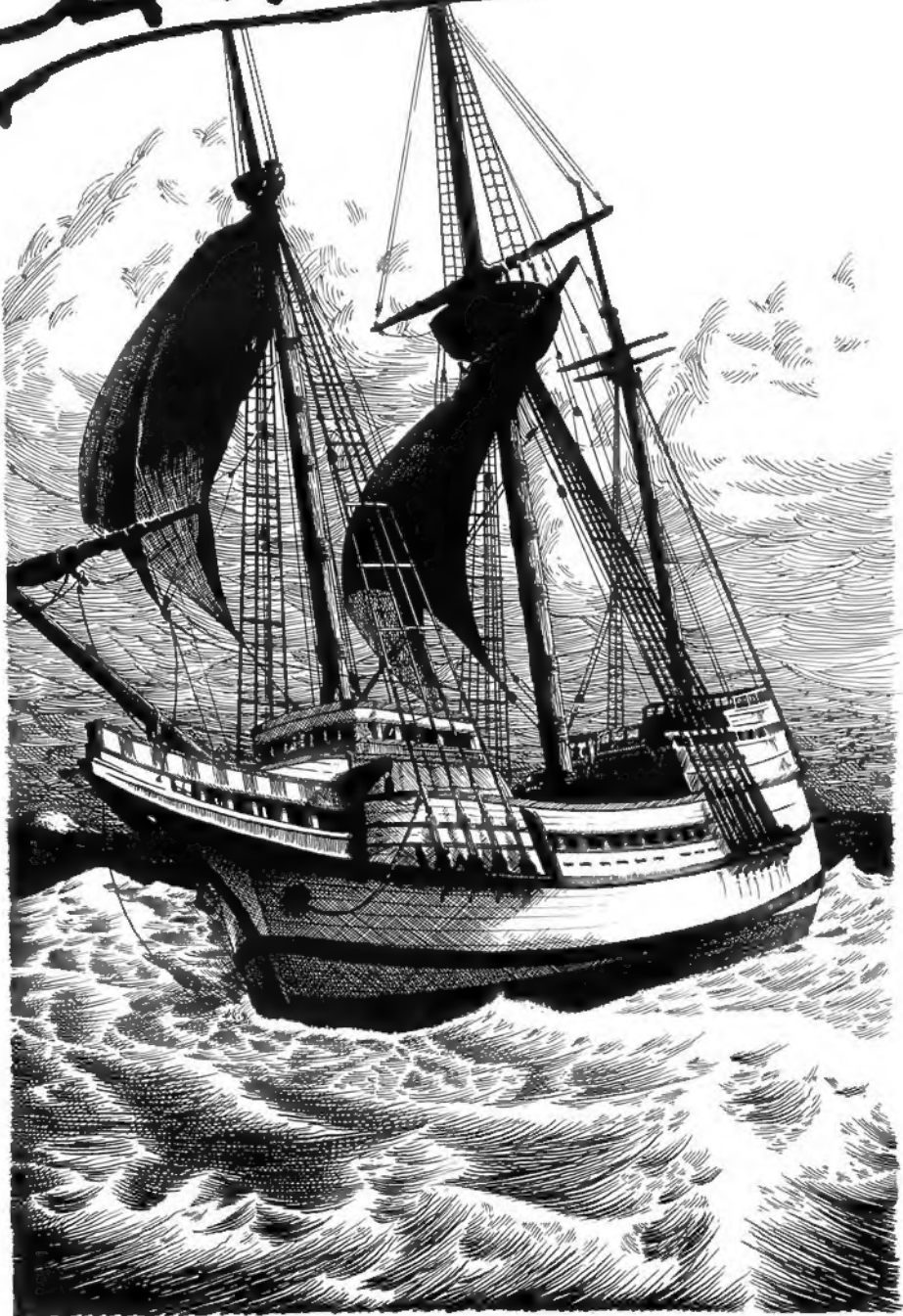
CEREBUS

WHAT SORT OF MAN READS

Black double-breasted jacket, about \$100, over a white cotton shirt, \$30, with grey tie, \$20, all by Steel. The charcoal-grey pants are Ecco L'Italia, \$45. Topped off with a pair of Polo eyeglasses, \$200, and antlers, \$5, by HMM Stag Party of Chicago.

Photo by Rose

GERHARD



The original splash page (get it?) for CEREBUS JAM no.1

IT WAS NURSE,
of course.

As Jaka had been out of her sight for several minutes; and as there had been no trace, in that time, of familiar, childish mumbling to reassure her stalwart guardian that no mischief was afoot (it was an article of faith with Nurse that Silence and Mischief were Twin Handmaidens to Chaos), she had risen from her bench (no mean feat in itself) and had made her way carefully to a position from where, unobserved, she could reassure herself that Jaka was, indeed, engaged in some transgression of soul-jeopardizing seriousness.

A less charitable narrator than myself might be moved to note that Nurse had taken extraordinary pains to mask her heavy tread; had warily circled a small pile of browning, brittle leaves and dry-as-dust twigs; had, in short, gone to great lengths to eliminate the remotest possibility of her approach being discovered or merely detected.

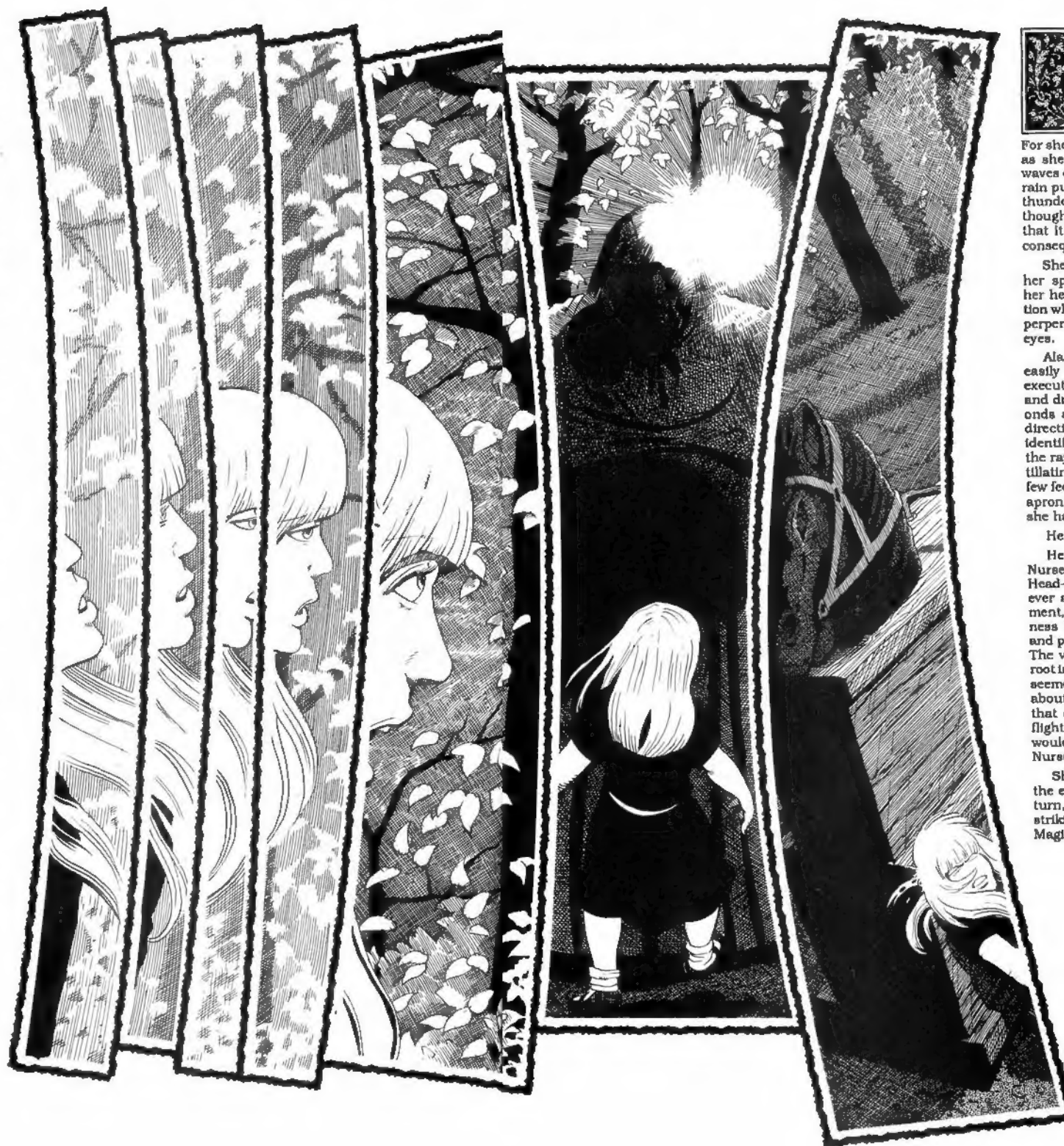
It would be equally uncharitable to assert that the potential of scaring a small child out of her small wits was not altogether unlikely with so silent an approach. Still, the notion that it was inadvisable to terrify a small child would have struck Nurse as an absurdity. Fear, instilled forthrightly, reinforced continuously and compounded daily was, to Nurse, one of the cornerstones of a truly fine up-bringing.

As the metal and wooden horse slid away with each measured pace Nurse took, the child stood revealed and Nurse's worst fears were made manifest. In that split instant when first she beheld Jaka whirling like a dervish, all her sure knowledge of centrifugal peril — softening of the brain, hair loss, misshapen feet, excessive masturbation, cocking of the eyes — flooded her mind as if some dam of rotational anxieties had been breached. There was no telling how long the child had been so-engaged; no way to determine the extent of irreparable damage done.

It was at that moment that Jaka (Terim preserve her) chose to laugh aloud.

Self-righteousness, fear, anger and the triumph of a predator rewarded welled, in equal and titanic measures, within Nurse's breast (either of which contained more than ample room for a good well) and emerged explosively in two syllables, the loudness of which startled (if only momentarily) Nurse herself.

JAKA!



IF THE SOUND startled Nurse, it came as something more of a surprise to Jaka who yet hovered in a new and wonderful reality of her own creation.

For she still felt herself to be rising slowly as she spun; still felt odd warmth and waves of sensation like wind-ripples on a rain puddle. Her first reaction to Nurse's thunder-clap of a cry, then, was the thought that Magic had fallen over and that it was, in some regard or other, a consequence, of this novel state.

She recovered sufficiently to interrupt her spinning in mid-revolution, raised her head to perpendicular (or that position which, in her dizziness, she felt to be perpendicular) and, finally, to open her eyes.

Alas, her surroundings were not so easily stilled and (despite her efforts) executed and relished several more mad and drunken pirouettes. After a few seconds and three steps in three different directions, she found herself unable to identify a large form before her, blocking the rays of sunlight streaming and scintillating between the trees. She was a very few feet, indeed, from the starched white apron before her mind could place where she has seen it before.

Her blood turned to ice in her veins.

Her first thought was flight; away from Nurse, from Palnu, from Uncle Jullus. Head-long thoughtless flight; to run forever and never stop. Even in that moment, some small part of her consciousness knew that escape was impossible and punishment (hanging?) inescapable. The voice was persuasive and she took root in indecision for several instants that seemed hours long. It was, at last, anxiety about her uncertain fate (vivisection?) that compelled her to turn and run. If flight would not carry her from Palnu, it would at least keep her tiny form from Nurse's ham-like fists.

She had not reckoned, however, with the extent of her disorientation. In mid-turn, she pitched violently backwards, striking her head sharply on the edge of Magic's base.